

# Comintern 7th World Congress Part 11: The Success of the Anti-Fascist United Front

Maurice Thorez  
1935 London: Modern Books  
39p.

## The Successes of the Anti-Fascist United Front

*Speech of Maurice Thorez at the Seventh  
World Congress of the Communist International*

Comrades, the report on the offensive of fascism and the struggle for the unity of the working class against fascism, presented at the Seventh Congress of the Communist International, raises questions of considerable importance and of unusual international significance. No one could have treated such questions with more competence and authority than our Comrade Dimitrov, the hero of the Leipzig trial. (*Applause.*)

It was at Leipzig, face to face with Goebbels and Goering, the sinister lieutenants of the sinister Hitler, that Dimitrov set forth the indictment of the bloody barbarism of fascism pronounced from this tribunal, the highest that exists, in a masterly manner—in the name, as he proudly declared, of the Communist International and of all the toilers of the world.

It was again Dimitrov who, by the example of his calm and indomitable courage, stimulated the unity of the working class, the union of all anti-fascists against the greatest crime known to history. Throughout the world, millions upon millions, Communists, Socialists, anti-fascists, toilers and intellectuals, followed with tense emotion the heroic struggle of Dimitrov against the executioners of the German people, the persecutors of our courageous Thälmann.

The name of the Bolshevik Dimitrov is pronounced with heartfelt gratitude and affectionate admiration by all those who want to unite in order to repel the brutal assault of fascism. The voice of Dimitrov, sounding far beyond the precincts of the Leipzig tribunal, gave new confidence and hope to the toilers of Germany; it inspired the anti-fascist fighters of all countries with new ardour.

Marcel Cachin has already given the Congress a vivid account of the great battle going on in France between the forces of reactionary fascism and those of progressive and revolutionary anti-fascism. There is no doubt that our struggle in France possesses great international significance. The future of the people of France and of the peoples of Europe, for many years to come, depends upon the issue of this battle and upon the outcome of our anti-fascist movement. Conscious of the responsibilities of our Communist Party, not only to the proletariat of France but to our brothers in other countries as well, we shall endeavour to make a



contribution based upon the rich experience of our anti-fascist movement to the discussion of the report of our Comrade Dimitrov, so powerful, and at the same time so simple and moving.

## I. FASCISM IN FRANCE—A REAL AND IMMEDIATE DANGER

The mighty demonstration of the People's Front on July 14th in France has had wide repercussions throughout the world. Never before had a manifestation of such magnitude been witnessed in Paris. Half a million men and women marched from the Place de la Bastille to the Place de la Nation through the old Faubourg Saint-Antoine, rich in revolutionary memories. At the initiative of the Amsterdam-Pleyel Committee, numerous organisations participated in the people's demonstration of July 14th in Paris and throughout France. Among them were the Communist Party, the Socialist Party, the Radical-Socialist Party, the two C.G.T.s (General Confederations of Labour), the League of the Rights of Man, various ex-servicemen's associations, the united Sports Federation, the Young Communist, Young Socialist, Young Radical and Young Republican Leagues, etc., etc. The crowd was ardent and enthusiastic. It acclaimed the People's Front and its slogans of immediate struggle for peace, bread and liberty. It manifested particular attachment to our Communist Party, the champion of workers' unity, the initiator and organiser of the People's Front. It launched the slogan, from then on the most widespread slogan in France, "*Soviets Everywhere!*" It was an immense success.

However, as Comrade Dimitrov emphasised yesterday, it would be quite dangerous to yield to the illusion that fascism is already overcome. At the very hour that the people of Paris were proclaiming its readiness not to let fascism pass, Colonel Count de la Rocque was reviewing his civil war troops. There were 35,000 of them, invited by the head of the government to relight the memorial flame at the tomb of the Unknown Soldier. They marched past in cadenced step, in military formation. And we know that the Croix de Feu (Fiery Cross) possesses arms, motorcycles, automobiles and airplanes. The fascist enemy has not been crushed. It is regrouping its forces and is preparing for its next attacks. The danger continues to grow. The profound causes that give birth to fascism, that permit it to develop and to gain in strength, have not disappeared. The continued aggravation of the general crisis of capitalism, and the persistence of the economic crisis, are making the toilers' living conditions more

and more miserable. In order to prevent and limit the revolt of the labouring masses, and to prepare for war by *ensuring its hinterland*, the bourgeoisie on an international scale requires fascism.

In France the curve of production has again fallen, dropping toward the previous low point of 1932. Unemployment is greater than last year. In spite of the restrictions of every kind imposed upon the workers, the minor government officials, the peasants, and the small shopkeepers for the past three years, the deficit in the state budget persists and grows. Fifteen billion francs have already been cut from salaries, pensions, allowances, relief, and credits beneficial to the community. But on the one hand, tax receipts are dropping steadily owing to the economic crisis, and on the other, the war and police budgets are expanding out of all measure. Moreover, the Laval government has again decided to effect a *saving* of eleven billions by means of emergency decrees. It is reducing the salaries of civil servants, employees and workers of the big public services by ten per cent. It is making a ten per cent. cut in the pensions paid the ex-servicemen and war victims, and in the allowances paid to retired government officials. It has cut the income of small rentiers by ten per cent.

A mighty wave of discontent is rising throughout the country. In Paris and in the provinces, in spite of bans, arrests and dismissals, the demonstrations multiply, imposing and militant. The revolutionary upsurge is growing. Communist influence is increasing. That is why the French bourgeoisie is turning toward fascist dictatorship, is arming and inciting its mercenary bands. That is why Premier Laval tolerates, encourages and even legalises the Croix de Feu at a time when the People's Front demands its disarming and dissolution.

Moreover, certain sections of the big bourgeoisie are opposing the Franco-Soviet pact of mutual assistance. They are carrying on a campaign against the Soviet Union and against Communism in general. They demand a rapprochement with Hitler Germany. They base themselves upon the most reactionary elements and upon the fascist groups, whose leaders have had talks with Hitler. To his shame be it said, they have even found a mouthpiece in the person of the renegade Doriot.

As we shall show in greater detail in a moment, fascism in France possesses this peculiarity, as compared to other countries, of being less developed in the countryside. Up to now it has recruited much more in the cities—among the office workers and the managing personnel of the big enterprises and government



institutions, among the shopkeepers and the members of the free professions—than among the peasants, in spite of the great efforts it is making in the villages.

This is due, as we shall see, to historical and political conditions, and particularly to the fact that France is a country of old bourgeois democracy, ever since the Revolution of 1789.

In analysing the general and special conditions of fascist development, we must pay very special attention to the subjective causes which rendered the temporary victory of fascism possible in several countries. These are, above all: the isolation of the working class, or its insufficient influence among the middle classes drawn along by fascism and placed under the middle leadership of the big bourgeoisie; as well as the division of the working class provoked and maintained by the reformist policy of Social-Democracy.

The course of events in Germany—where we witnessed several purely socialist or coalition governments, and in Austria and Spain—where Socialist Ministers likewise sat in the councils of government, particularly illustrates this tragic reality. Social-Democracy's accord with the bourgeoisie had obstinate rejection of the united front with the Communists as its complement.

The armed struggles of the Austrian and Spanish proletariat, the fighting in Vienna and in the Asturias, even though they were unable to prevent the victory of fascism, none the less resulted in a widening of the united front. The Communist and Socialist proletarians shed their blood together against the common enemy for the same great and noble cause of the liberation of the working class. The events in Germany, Austria and Spain suddenly illuminated the road for a large number of our Socialist brothers.

These events opened their eyes to another policy, to the policy of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, to the policy of the Communist International.

What a startling contrast between the results of the two policies, the two roads proposed to the working class: one by Social-Democracy, the other by the Communist International!

On the one hand, defeat, fascism and its train of horrors; the economic crisis and its formidable consequences for the working class: unemployment, penury, starvation, the degradation of man; and against this sombre background the mad race of armaments, the preparation for a frightful war which would plunge the world into an abyss of ruin and blood.

On the other hand, the victorious building of socialism, the miracles of industrialisation and collectivisation, the well-being,

the cultural blossoming, of a free people; the joy of living discovered again in the love of creative labour; a new world that exalts the personality while elevating the collective; the land of the Soviets that is fighting for peace.

Glory to the Bolshevik Party! Glory to Lenin, who led the working class to power over one-sixth of the globe and traced the road along which we are marching!

Glory to Stalin, our beloved leader, whose genius has solved the problems of building socialism in the U.S.S.R., and who is leading the international proletariat to victory. (*Applause.*)

The Soviet Union, by its very existence, lays bare and accentuates the internal and external contradictions of capitalism. It intensifies the general crisis of capitalism, and makes it more profound. It is the lever of the proletarian revolution throughout the world. By its living example, it wins the workers and the toiling masses for the cause of socialism; it encourages them to revolutionary struggle under the leadership of the Communist Parties.

It is under these general conditions of the offensive of fascism and of the parallel growth of the forces of revolution, under the influence of the Soviet Union, that the resistance of the masses, the extent of the anti-fascist movement in France, acquire a great international significance.

Hitler's coming to power in Germany has galvanised the forces of reaction in all the countries of capitalism. In Austria, in Poland, in Czechoslovakia, even in France, the success of National-Socialism, while arousing the working class, has reinforced the fascist elements and tendencies, and fortified fascism wherever it is in power. At the same time the menace of a new imperialist war grew, as did the threat of aggression against the Soviet Union.

The successes gained in our anti-fascist struggle in France are galvanising the forces of the working class and of anti-fascism in all the capitalist countries, at the same time helping to put off the imperialist war and to prevent aggression against the Soviet Union.

The breadth and the drive of the anti-fascist movement in France are modifying to a certain extent the relationship of forces on an international scale, in favour of the camp of the proletarian revolution.

## II. THE LESSONS OF INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Before speaking of the course of the battle between fascism and the working class in France, I think it is useful to emphasise the



extent to which the toilers of France have been taught by their painful lessons and by international experience, particularly by the events in Germany.

Comrade Dimitrov explained in his report that the Communist Parties had not been strong enough to draw the working class and all the toilers, divided by the noxious policy of Social-Democracy into the struggle against fascism.

Many weaknesses and omissions in the anti-fascist struggle in other countries were due to an inaccurate estimate of fascism, and at the very least, confusion regarding the specific content of fascism compared to bourgeois democracy. From this fundamental error there could only follow passivity, underestimation of the fascist danger and of the terrible menace that it represents for all peoples, both by the exercise of its bestial dictatorship, as well as by its foreign policy of adventure and provocation, which leads directly to war.

When the phrase "fascism is here" was used at every turn to characterise the slightest fact of repression, it was not a correct analysis of events and of their development.

Understanding of the fascist danger and of the methods to be used in repelling it was not made easier for the workers. When Neumann wrote in the *Rote Fahne* that "the Bruening government was a fascist dictatorship," he confused our comrades in Germany and hampered the Communist Party of Germany in its efforts to rally all the toilers against their worst enemy, Hitler fascism.

The failure to understand the role of fascism, which is at one and the same time a product of capitalist decomposition and the instrument of the brutal and violent offensive of capital against the working class, also resulted in a certain fatalism.

At the Eleventh Plenum, in March 1931, Comrade Manuilsky denounced the monstrous error of those who, seeing only the first of these factors, "would ascribe to fascism an exclusively revolutionising role."<sup>1</sup>

At the Twelfth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. Comrade Ercoli pointed out how dangerous it could be to wait for an automatic and rapid collapse of fascism after it seized power. An analogous position on the part of our Communist Party of Italy, where sectarian tendencies dominated for a long time, did not allow it to act effectively at the time of the assassination of Matteotti.

Other weaknesses or defects came from a superficial and very

<sup>1</sup> D. Z. Manuilsky, *The Communist Parties and the Crisis of Capitalism*, p. 107. (Co-op. edition), 1931.

inaccurate evaluation of the development of the struggle, of the relationship of class forces, of the episodes of fascism's advance and retreat and of the phenomena of differentiation and regrouping that were taking place within it. Lenin was fond of saying that "the course of the revolution is not as straight as the Nevsky Prospect." Nor, consequently, is the course of counter-revolution any more uniform. It presents zigzags, ups and downs; in its periods of rise fascism tends to become consolidated; on the other hand, in its phases of marking time, or sometimes of the drop in its influence under the pressure of the revolutionary masses, it may experience disturbances, inner struggles, and desertions. In the latter case we must not hasten to proclaim that "fascism is already beaten" nor to exaggerate the internal dissensions or even some symptoms of disintegration.

The major weaknesses in several countries, and in Germany above all, was the absence of a fighting united front of the working class against fascism. German Social-Democracy preferred to bury itself under the ruins of the Weimar Republic rather than consent to a united front of the working class. Unfortunately, the directives of Thälmann and of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Germany for the organisation of the united front were not realised in full.

The crisis of Social-Democracy, the drop in its influence and in its organised membership, the disarray in the masses of workers, were not always correctly evaluated. To the extent that the proletarians were not gained for the united front, it represented a weakening of the working class by which fascism profited. The considerable progress of our sister Party of Germany, which succeeded in obtaining 6,000,000 votes, was less than that of the National Socialists. Similar facts have recently occurred in the German areas of Czechoslovakia. Our Czech Communist Party won a great election victory in the Czech and Slovak regions, and in the Carpathian Ukraine. But in the German-speaking areas it was the pro-Nazi Henlein party that absorbed the bourgeois parties, and, to a large extent, the Social-Democracy, and caused us losses.

The other essential weaknesses consisted in insufficient attention to the partial demands of the toiling masses, principally to the needs of the middle classes, which became an easy prey to fascist demagoguery. Finally, there was at times some hesitation in deciding and effecting at the opportune moment the action that alone could have rallied the masses and caused the balance to tip in favour of the working class.



### III. THE FASCIST OFFENSIVE AND THE RESISTANCE OF THE MASSES IN FRANCE

In his remarkable work *The Class Struggles in France*, Marx wrote that revolution organises counter-revolution, and that, by arms the revolution by giving it a real revolutionary turn matured in the battle against its adversary.

Marx's thesis enables us better to grasp the stages and aspects of the development of fascism in France, and of the growing resistance of the masses to the fascist offensive.

The first groupings of a clearly fascist character appeared in France at the end of 1924, following the mighty demonstration that accompanied the remains of Jaurès from the Chamber of Deputies to the Pantheon. It was at the time of the first cartel, that is to say, of Radical Cabinets supported by the Socialist Party. Communist influence was on the rise after the courageous campaign of our Party against the occupation of the Ruhr and against the Poincaré government.

The bourgeoisie financed the organisation of fighting detachments against the working class. This first attempt met with failure owing to the general situation, as well as to the Party's vigorous counter-thrust. The activity of the Leagues was met by a greater activity of the Communist Party. At that time we alone fought at the head of the toilers against the war in Morocco, and later against the "Poincaré experiment" put through in 1926 at the expense of the toilers.

In 1929, with the growing authority of the Party, owing to the repercussions of its campaigns, and at a time when French imperialism was at the head of the sworn enemies of the Soviet Union and was feverishly preparing for war, a new attack was made upon the Communist Party and its newspaper *l'Humanité*. The fascist groups reappeared on the scene. A feature of this period was that the bourgeoisie of France was not content to push for the organisation of leagues recruited among the French nationalists; it encouraged and supported the very numerous groups of white guard counter-revolutionary emigrés in Paris.

Profiting by the arrest of the principal leaders of the Communist Party, the Barbé-Célor group succeeded in getting hold of the leadership of the Party at this time. This group put the revolutionary movement on a sectarian path which facilitated the attack of the bourgeoisie as well as the treason of the Pupist<sup>2</sup> leaders.

<sup>2</sup> Pupists—a group of renegades expelled from the Communist Party and calling themselves "Party of Proletarian Unity."—Ed.

After the Barbé-Célor group had been exposed and its sectarian opportunist policy rejected, the Party began a new advance. 1932 was the period of the second cartel, coinciding with the aggravation of the economic crisis, the commencement of the financial crisis, and the chronic deficit in the state budget, as well as the period of the rapid offensive of fascism in Central Europe. The growing discontent of the masses and a correct policy of demands pursued by the Communist Party aided the current of the united front and of trade union unity. The Amsterdam-Pleyel movement successfully developed at the call of Romain Rolland and Henri Barbusse.

After a great financial scandal had been uncovered at the end of 1933, the fascist groups endeavoured to exploit it for a campaign against Parliament and against the Radical Party that was in power at the time.

The leaders of the fascist leagues and the reactionary politicians endeavoured to deflect away from Communism and to channel for the advantage of capitalism the legitimate indignation of the people of France against the swindlers and their accomplices: parliamentarians, ministers, high judges, ambassadors, prefects, retired generals, and high dignitaries of the Legion of Honour. They carried on a violent press campaign; they attempted numerous demonstrations. On February 6th, 1934, the fascist and reactionary leaders launched their troops in an attack against the Chamber of Deputies. They were unable to succeed in their enterprise. The reply of the working class was prompt and effective. On the 6th, our Party had organised counter-demonstrations. On the 7th the aroused working-class quarters were at the boiling point. The Daladier government resigned; Doumergue, ex-President of the Republic, was called to power. All demonstrations were prohibited. The Socialist Party abandoned a demonstration that it had called for the 8th in the Place de la Bastille.

The Communist Party, ignoring the police prohibition, persisted in the demonstration that it had fixed for the 9th of February in the Place de la République. The grandsons of the Communards, the proletarians of Paris and of the Red suburbs, replied without hesitation to the call of the Communist Party. They fought the police for five hours to the cry of "Soviets Everywhere!" "Down with Fascism!" throughout a third of Paris, in the districts of the east and around the Place de la République.

Numerous Socialist workers had left the places where they were being kept confined, to join their Communist brothers. The in-



dependent union of government employees marched in a column down the Boulevard Magenta towards the Place de la République. Ten dead were left on the pavement, among them a cement-worker belonging to the reformist trade union and several non-Party workers.

The courageous battle of Communist Paris electrified the workers and peasants in the province. It was a signal and an example. On February 12th the general strike called by the C.G.T., under the pressure of the C.G.T.U. (Unitary Confederation of Labour) and the Communist Party, pulled 4,500,000 workers out of the factories. For the first time Communists, Socialists, and workers organised in both the revolutionary and the reformist trade union federations were united on a huge scale in demonstrations. There were more than 1,000,000 demonstrators, 200,000 of them in Paris. An equal number, ardent and stirred, participated in the funeral of the victims on February 17th. The working class of France, influenced by the energetic action of the Communist Party, had repulsed the first great attack of fascism. (*Applause.*)

But Doumergue is in power—the National Union, a political coalition serving big business. The government imposes heavy sacrifices upon the toilers. It favours the criminal acts of the fascist bands, who are trying to regain influence after their half-defeat in February. Throughout the country attempts at fascist parades or meetings meet with vigorous counter-demonstrations by the workers. A dozen toilers are killed in battle against the fascists, who are armed and protected by the police. But each victim fallen for the cause renders more ardent and fierce the will of the workers, who do not yield, but gain ground. Meanwhile, the pact of common struggle against fascism is signed by the Communist Party and the Socialist Party. The middle classes begin to feel the attraction of the united working class!

The Communist Party wins a brilliant victory in the cantonal elections in October 1934, limiting the advance of the Right parties that favour fascism. Doumergue is forced to resign.

Then, face to face with the growth of Communist influence and with the development of united action, the fascist groups redouble their activity. Some of them have remained sects, mercenary bands without great influence among the masses. The Croix de Feu, on the other hand, has developed, and it multiplies its civil war manoeuvres.

During the recent ministerial crises Colonel Count de la

Rocque, head of the Croix de Feu, stated "that there would be sport if the Left government were to take over the direction of affairs." The insolent threats of de la Rocque, his rehearsals of future punitive expeditions, had as their result the rapprochement of the Radicals with the People's Front. They joined in the rally of July 14th.

And now the battle is going to develop and rise to a higher level, owing to the ferment provoked by the application of Laval's emergency decrees.

There is at present a marking time, and in some cases even a decline, in the influence of fascism in France. We see polemics going on between the different fascist groups, dissensions within several of these groups. The French fascists have not been able to unify their movement entirely. The Camelots du Roi are quarrelling with the Young Patriots; the Francists and the Solidarité Française polemicise against the Croix de Feu in their press, etc.

The Agrarian Party has not yet succeeded in organising the peasant front. Once its leaders denounced the fascist Dorgères, who was acting on behalf of a clan of country squires and big landed proprietors. The Taxpayers' League, led by reactionaries, has suffered its first split and is threatened by a second, because its leadership, tributary to big business, attempts to justify the emergency decrees. Likewise, among the ex-servicemen and in the association of small tradesmen, among those who backed the fascist groups on the evening of February 6th, the reactionary and pro-fascist chiefs are often put in a difficult situation by their rank and file adherents who are influenced by the Communist Party and the People's Front.

The reactionary camp is experiencing defections and desertions. Another fact of some importance: voices have been raised among the Catholics against fascism and against fascist penetration of the Catholic organisations. Sections of the Young Christian Workers have expelled members of the Young Patriots from their ranks. Hitler's attack upon the churches has not been without its repercussions in France. On July 27th last, a big meeting for the liberation of Thälmann rallied an audience of 10,000 in Boulogne, a suburb of Paris. At this meeting, after the Communist and Socialist speakers, and after the speech of Pierre Cot, former Radical minister, a Catholic priest got up and denounced Hitler's persecutions and called for organised struggle against fascism. Finally, certain reactionary leaders, such as Tardieu, former Premier, profess a gloomy pessimism. He publicly vents his ran-



cour against his friends of yesterday. He blames all of them, accusing all of them of lacking courage.

But once again, the big bourgeoisie, under the spur of necessity and fearing for its domination, is forcing the leaders and the most resolute and bellicose elements of fascism into a regrouping of their forces. That is what has brought about the great development of the Croix de Feu movement. The Croix de Feu, an organisation of national volunteers, now claims more than 300,000 members. It has established sections sub-divided into groups. Its head, Colonel Count de la Rocque, whose brother is in the service of the pretender to the throne of France, is an ex-officer of the espionage service, the Second Bureau of the French General Staff. He served in Morocco as an intelligence officer. He left the army in order to enter the service of the electricity trust, in a highly-paid job. After he had become president of the Fiery Cross movement, he steered the latter into a sharply fascist course. His programme is expressed in the formula: "*French Reconciliation—Love of Country—Reform of the Constitution.*" Translated for the working class, this reads: In the service of capital against the working class. The anti-capitalist, anti-parliamentary and anti-government demagoguery of the Croix de Feu movement poorly veils the actual points of its programme, such as repeal of the social insurance law and, at the present time, acceptance of the emergency decrees. The leaders of the Croix de Feu are at the service of those who pay them, the electricity trust with M. Mercier, member of the Croix de Feu, at its head, the great French banks with Finaly at their head, and the Comité des Forges and the Bank of France, with de Wendel, who carries membership card No. 13 in the Croix de Feu.

A few words on the methods of the Croix de Feu. They have organised soup kitchens, workshops to teach sewing to young girls, charity clothing clubs, dispensaries for the sick, visiting nurse services, social welfare services, children's groups and crèches. They have organised young people's clubs, theatres, choruses, gymnasiums, and vacation camps. They have even organised some repair shops for the young unemployed, under the guise of apprenticeship. They have equipped a solarium, as well as convalescent homes.

The Croix de Feu established one of its soup kitchens at Villejuif, a town with a Communist administration. The Party recommended the unemployed to go and eat the soup of the Croix de Feu while demonstrating against the fascist leaders. For three weeks an unusual struggle thus took place which aroused the

workers all over the country. The unemployed, with Communists at their head, went to the soup kitchens singing the *Internationale* and hissing the Fiery Cross members, shouting: "To the lamp-post with de la Rocque!" (*Applause.*)

It need not be added that the Croix de Feu did not continue soup kitchens of this sort for a long time.

I have already mentioned a speech made by de la Rocque at Algiers, announcing that if a Left government were formed there would be sport.

Here is another statement made at Chartres on June 23rd. Speaking at night in a meadow by torchlight, after the Hitler fashion, he said: "Weighing the full gravity of my words, Croix de Feu, I say to you: You are performing your armed vigil this evening. In a few weeks, at most, our ideas will be in power—I swear to you. Actively employ the little time that remains to us to perfect your sections, so that at my order, and at the moment that I shall choose, everything be ready down to the slightest detail. We shall sweep away parliamentarism... the French flag must be master on every bit of territory."

The fascists are carrying on chauvinist campaigns against foreign workers, the "metics." They are anti-semites.

What is more, they demand an alliance with Hitler. They are endeavouring to arrive at an understanding with Hitler against the Soviet Union, against Communism.

Without dwelling again on the considerable funds at the disposal of the Croix de Feu, I should like to say a word or two about their methods. All the Croix de Feu members within a radius of 100 kilometres assemble at a given place. Their leader arrives from Paris in an auto or by plane. When he travelled in Algeria, de la Rocque reviewed the crews of some thirty planes. The Croix de Feu is linked up with the higher officers and the generals, and particularly with the present Air Minister. M. Laval had to admit this in his statement at the time Parliament recessed. The Croix de Feu is supported by the church, by the high clergy.

The French fascists have already assassinated toilers. They speak a cynical language. In Moselle the fascists distributed a tract which says that "Fascism will triumph even if we have to rip open their bellies, tear out their hearts, and open their guts to the sun." The fascist groups openly practice shooting. They have molested and wounded even Radicals who tend towards the People's Front.

The victory of fascism in France would mean the economic and political annihilation of the toiling masses. For the workers it



would mean starvation wages, the abolition of their meagre social legislation, the prohibition of strikes and of all resistance to the economic offensive of capital, the destruction of our trade unions, the dispersion or "co-ordination" of our co-operatives. For the government officials it would mean salaries reduced to nothing, dismissals, the most extreme drill-sergeant spirit in the government institutions. The government of the National Union has already abolished five thousand lay teachers' positions. The victory of fascism would mean the small shopkeepers and artisans delivered over without defence to the pitiless exploitation of big business, of the landowners, the trusts, the transport companies, Monsieur Mercier of the electricity trust, M. de Wendel of the Comité des Forges. It would mean the peasants sacrificed to the interests and the privileges of the monopoly capitalists, and the financiers, the complete ruin of their farms. It would mean the oppression of the intellectuals; the greatest scientists, such as Perrin and Langevin, are already subject to odious attacks; professors are shamelessly and vilely attacked by fascist bands. It would mean, as in Hitler Germany, mediæval auto-da-fes, the suppression of all liberties, bloody terror, the population totally enslaved, the militants of the working class imprisoned and assassinated, the Communists, the Socialists, the Republicans, and the Democrats hard hit by fascism. It would mean, as in Germany, following upon the Jews, the Catholics and the Protestants, stricken by fascism. It would mean a catastrophe for the country, and reaction strengthened throughout Europe. It would mean war between the peoples, and aggression against the Soviet Union.

Cost what it may, we want to avoid and prevent such a horror for our country, for the whole world. (*Applause.*)

We have begun. How, comrades?

How did we set about it?

#### IV. IN DEFENCE OF THE DEMANDS AND THE LIBERTIES OF THE FRENCH PEOPLE

The starting point of our Party's success in the organisation of the united front, and of the People's Front against fascism, was the attention paid to the immediate demands of the toiling masses, the defence of their daily interests.

The Party, effectively advised by the Communist International, endeavoured to formulate demands interesting each category of workers.

We have fought, and we are fighting, against the reduction of wages and salaries, for the forty-hour week without reduction of

wages, for collective wage agreements, for real social insurance guaranteeing against all risks at the sole expense of the employers and the state.

We have fought, and we are fighting, for work for the unemployed, for their registration on the unemployment relief rolls, for the increase of allowances paid the unemployed, for the organisation of soup kitchens, and for the free distribution of coal, clothing and milk for children.

In our Communist municipalities we gave all we could to the unemployed. In Ivry, for example, a municipal truck delivers to the door free milk for the little children of the unemployed. (*Applause.*) The older children receive free meals in the school lunch-rooms. Such examples, brought to the attention of the workers, especially in the Paris region, have contributed considerably to our successes in the recent elections.

We have fought for the protection of the workers' children and the young workers. Our Young Communist League, under the direction of the Central Committee, has worked out a programme for the defence of the young toilers which has become the basis for the youth united front.

We have fought, and we are fighting, for the defence of the minor officials, the railway men, and postal employees against the emergency decrees, against suspensions and dismissals.

We have fought, and we are fighting, for the defence of the rights of the ex-servicemen and the war victims against the reduction of their pensions.

We have fought, and we are fighting, for the interests of tenants, shopkeepers, artisans and peasants. We have demanded the reduction of rents and leaseholds, the reduction of taxes, and the organisation of immediate aid to all the victims of the crisis.

We have supported the peasants who demonstrated against the lowering of the prices for their products; we have proposed a debt moratorium for them; we have demanded crisis relief for them; non-interest-bearing loans, and the free distribution of seed and fertiliser.

We have fought, and we are fighting, against the high cost of living, to draw the working women into the battle against the big middlemen, but taking care not to line up the consumers against the peasants or against the small tradesmen, but bringing them together against the common enemy, big business.

We have formulated certain demands, but we have not hesitated to take over those that were launched by other organisations, even those hostile to the Communist Party, provided these demands



correspond to the desires of certain social categories, and are not opposed to the interests of the working class. The success of our policy of demands cannot be better brought out than by quoting the following passage from a Paris newspaper, *La République*, dated July 21st, 1935:

"The Communists are perfecting their tactics every day; these tactics are simple, but they have an undeniable power of attraction; they systematically base themselves upon the discontented. If there is a discontented person anywhere, they hurl themselves upon him: 'Comrade, the Communists are with you.' Are the ex-servicemen affected by the emergency decrees? 'Comrades, here are the Communists.' Are government officials affected? 'Comrades, here are the Communists.' The Communists are behind the farmers, the sharecroppers, the peasants in general, behind the tenants. And since all France is discontented, there they are, the attorneys for the country." (*Applause.*)

We have done more than formulate the urgent demands of the toiling masses. We have indicated the means of financing them without aggravating the deficit in the government budget. We have even offered our solutions for meeting the budget deficit. We have proposed reducing the war and police budgets, recovering the advances made to the big banks that dominate the government, and revising government contracts. Above all, we propose an extraordinary and progressive levy on capital.

Our whole campaign is conducted under the slogan: "Make the rich pay." And we did not merely carry on a campaign, but we gave an example of how it could be done, to the extent that the administration of big municipalities enabled us to do so. The state allows municipalities to levy a progressive tax on premises used for commercial and industrial purposes. In Paris this tax is set at the fixed rate of 3 per cent. In Ivry, in a Communist municipality, we levied the same tax in the following fashion: 1 per cent. for annual rents below ten thousand francs, for small merchants; 2 per cent. for medium annual rents, ranging from 10,000 to 20,000 francs; and 6 per cent. above 20,000 francs. This tax provided our local budget with 1,275,000 francs; and it is the money paid by the industrialists of Ivry that has enabled us to give milk to the children of the unemployed. (*Applause.*)

The whole press has spoken of our financial programme. On several occasions Premier Doumergue polemised against the Communists in radio broadcasts, criticising our financial proposals. The Central Committee issued a poster: "The Communist Party Replies to M. Doumergue," which had an unprecedented success

and, by its content and its deliberately moderate tone, produced a deep impression among the petty middle-class elements.

The Party endeavours to reply to all the questions of the day. To offer its solutions to all current problems: the Central Committee worked out only a few days ago a "plan of financial re-adjustment." It headed this plan with its proposal for a levy on big fortunes, as well as various measures against the rich. It added the seizure of the Bank of France by the state, and control over private banks. Owing to the financial crisis and speculation in the franc, control of the Bank of France has become a pressing issue.

Long ago Marx emphasised the interest of the financiers and bankers in state budget deficits. For the bankers, the deficit and state loans are at once an object of speculation, a source of their profit, and a means of dominating the state, of holding it at their mercy under the constant threat of bankruptcy. Premier Daladier, Radical, declared at a congress of his party, that:

"Two hundred families have become the undisputed masters, not merely of French economy, but of French politics."

Lenin wrote, quoting Lysis, that:

"... the French Republic is a financial monarchy; it is the complete domination of the financial oligarchy; the latter controls the press and the government."<sup>3</sup>

The regents of the Bank of France belong to these two hundred families. They are the owners and the directors of the big banks, the mines, the blast furnaces, the railways. The Communist Party proposes, because the idea is already in the minds of the masses, the abolition, pure and simple, of this regency council, the master of credit and money, and the veritable holder of power in the country.

The effectiveness of our proposal is underscored by the anger of the reactionary and pro-fascist newspapers.

One of the factors of our success in organising a wide anti-fascist front in France has been the consistent position of our Communist Party on the question of bourgeois democracy, as well as the utilising of the revolutionary traditions of the French people. Fascism and bourgeois democracy are two forms of the dictatorship of capital. It does not follow, though, that we can be indifferent to one or the other of these forms of economic and political enslavement.

Fascism is bloody terror against the working class, the destruction

<sup>3</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. V, "Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism," p. 49.



tion of workers' organisations, the dissolution of the class trade unions, the suppression of the Communist Parties, the mass arrest of militant workers and revolutionaries, the torturing and assassination of the best sons of the working class. Fascism is the unleashing of bestiality, the return to the pogroms of the Middle Ages, the annihilation of all culture, the reign of ignorance and cruelty; it is the hideous war to which the incessant provocations and all the acts of Hitler and Mussolini are leading.

Bourgeois democracy is a minimum of precarious, contingent liberties, unceasingly reduced by the bourgeoisie in power, but none the less offering the working class, the toiling masses, opportunity of mobilisation and of organisation against capitalism. In his report to the Seventeenth Congress of the Bolshevik Party, after having shown that "the idea of storming capitalism is maturing in the minds of the masses," Stalin said:

"This, as a matter of fact, explains the fact that the ruling classes in the capitalist countries are zealously destroying, or nullifying, the last vestiges of parliamentarism and bourgeois democracy which might be used by the working class in its struggle against the oppressors."<sup>4</sup>

Stalin then showed, in the passage cited yesterday by Comrade Dimitrov, that fascism was not merely a sign of the weakness of the working class, but a sign of the weakness of the bourgeoisie as well.

Stalin has given us the key to the problems facing the Communist Parties, and ours in particular. He shows us, first of all, that fascism does not result from the mere desires of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie must ensure or retain for itself a mass base for the exercise of its class rule. It is "*obliged*," Stalin emphasises, to resort to fascist methods solely because of the extreme aggravation of all the contradictions in the capitalist system.

Then Stalin shows us the importance of a resolute struggle to retain democratic liberties—the vestiges of bourgeois democracy that can be utilised against the capitalist enemy and its fascist tool—for the working class, and for the labouring masses in general.

The working class of France is aware of these observations by Stalin, the leader of the world proletariat. Taught and guided by the Communist Party, the working class of France is likewise aware of the great possibilities of mobilising the middle classes offered by the defence against fascism of the liberties to which the people of France is so profoundly attached. Comrade Dimitrov

<sup>4</sup> *Socialism Victorious*, p. 11.

rightly said that we must not close our eyes to the growing reactionary limitation of bourgeois democracy, to the process of fascising the State, to the necessity of fighting step by step for every opportunity, for every liberty of the working class. In this we profit by the favourable objective conditions, beyond a doubt.

France is a country of old bourgeois democracy, the classical country of the bourgeois revolution. The working class has participated in several revolutions; the Paris Commune was the first example of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The French peasant regards with abhorrence the descendants and the successors of the old feudal lords. He detests the squire, the priest, and the ex-nobleman. He knows that the Great French Revolution gave him the land. In 1848 the peasant did not understand the Second Republic, and he threw himself into the arms of Louis Bonaparte because, ever since the beginning of the February revolution, the big bourgeoisie, the financial aristocracy, had burdened him with new taxes, encumbered him with mortgages, and thus threatened his possession of his plot of land. Subsequently, under the Third Republic, the French peasant, who still is the most numerous element in the population of our country, enjoyed certain advantages. Up to very recently the bourgeoisie had handled him with care. Universal suffrage gave him the illusion of being the sovereign of the country. In fact, he was and remains the arbiter of the situation. The French peasant is a republican. That is not a phrase. It sufficed that the fascist agitator Dorgères be unmasked as a royalist for the peasants of the Blois region, though very dissatisfied with the government, to defeat him in a parliamentary by-election. Our Communist Party has not hesitated to make use of the revolutionary traditions. In a letter of September 21st, 1890, to Joseph Bloch, Engels writes:

"Among these [conditions] the economic ones are finally decisive. But the political, etc., ones, and indeed even the traditions which haunt human minds, also play a part, although not a decisive one."<sup>5</sup>

Up to recently the bourgeoisie had made use of these traditions against the working class, to justify and consolidate its rule. Now the revolutionary traditions are becoming an additional weapon in the hands of the working class in its struggle against the bourgeois state in its fascist form. We draw from the past to prepare for our future.

<sup>5</sup> *The Correspondence of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels*, p. 476. (Martin Lawrence, London), 1934.



In the name of the working class we claim the intellectual and revolutionary heritage of the Encyclopædists of the 18th century, who paved the way for the Great Revolution of 1789 with their works and with their writings. We show that their materialist doctrine, made more profound, developed, and enriched by the genius of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, has become dialectical materialism, Marxism-Leninism: the theory and the practice of the revolutionary proletariat, the great builder of socialism, already the master of power in one-sixth of the globe.

We show how the Communist proletarians, following Lenin's recommendation, try "to assimilate the treasures of knowledge accumulated by all humanity." (Lenin's Speech to the Youth.) And we do this at a time when the bourgeoisie, and fascism in particular, are trying to throw us back into the barbarism of past centuries, are forsaking the work of the Encyclopædists, are condemning materialism, are refusing to teach the theories of Darwin, are burning the works of Marx, and are fostering credulity, superstition and brutalisation.

In the name of the working class we claim the heritage of the Jacobins' audacity and revolutionary energy.

Lenin often said: "The Bolsheviks are the Jacobins of the proletarian revolution." He wrote:

"The bourgeois historians see in Jacobinism a downfall. The proletarian historians regard Jacobinism as the greatest expression of an oppressed class in its struggle for liberation. The Jacobins gave France the best models of a democratic revolution; they repelled in an exemplary fashion the coalition of monarchs formed against the republic. . . .

It is natural for the bourgeoisie to hate Jacobinism. It is natural for the petty-bourgeoisie to fear it. The class-conscious workers and toilers have faith in the transference of power to the revolutionary oppressed class, for that is the essence of Jacobinism, and it is the only escape from the present crisis, the only way of stopping economic disintegration and the war."<sup>6</sup>

We glorify the memory of the Commune of 1793 and of the Paris Commune of 1871. As against the chauvinism and fascism and the patriotism of the munitions merchants we proclaim our love of country, of our people.

We express our pride in its past of centuries of struggle against enslavement and oppression. And we, the great-grandsons of the

<sup>6</sup> *Collected Works*, Vol. XX, Bk. II, p. 278, "Can Jacobinism Frighten the Working Class?"

sans-culottes<sup>7</sup> of 1793, of the soldiers of Valmy, deny the aristocrats—the descendants of the émigrés of Coblenz, M. Colonel de la Rocque, president of the Croix de Feu, whose great-grandfather was in the army of Condé and of the king of Prussia—the right to speak in the name of our country. We denounce them as the traitors of yesterday and of to-morrow, ready, like their sires long ago, like the Russian whiteguards of to-day, to bear arms against their own country in order to maintain or recover their privileges and their profits.

The National Conference of Ivry which was held more than a year ago, in June 1934, boldly oriented the Party along this line, in accordance with the thesis developed so brilliantly yesterday by Comrade Dimitrov. We have used this language from the tribune of the Chamber, and in our meetings. We have developed the same idea in our posters, our articles, in all our material.

Moreover, we are fighting with even greater energy for the self-determination of the people of Alsace-Lorraine, for the independence of the colonial peoples of Northern Africa and Indo-China, whom we support with all our strength in their struggle against the yoke of French imperialism.

In Algeria, under the influence of our policy, the Arab workers, sustained and encouraged by the European toilers, replied with huge counter-demonstrations to the demonstration of the Croix de Feu. In France itself we have been able to come to an understanding with numerous groups and persons against the Régnier decrees that strike at the people of Algeria.

The reactionary press thundered against the presence of the tricolour alongside the red flag at the head of the July 14th demonstration. The reactionary bourgeoisie understands quite well that this is the symbol of the alliance of the petty bourgeoisie with the working class, an alliance which it fears more than anything else in the world. We do not intend to let fascism have the flag of the Great Revolution, nor the *Marseillaise* of the soldiers of the Convention. (*Applause.*)

When our Comrade Duclos read the declaration of the Communist Party at the Buffalo meeting, the morning of July 14th, he explained what the *Marseillaise*, the hymn of the past, and the *Internationale*, the hymn of the future, meant for us. The audience arose and sang a stanza of the *Marseillaise* and a stanza of the *Internationale* in honour of the representative of the Communist Party. (*Applause.*)

<sup>7</sup> Literally—"without breeches"—the term of opprobrium applied to the Republican revolutionaries by the Royalists.



Since last year we have addressed ourselves to the soldier sons of the people and to the republican officers. We expressed our hope that they would not let themselves be involved against the people and that they would know how to foil, if necessary, the plot which the reactionary and fascist officers and generals are preparing against the people's liberties and against the country. On July 14th, in the meeting of the People's Front, the Radical deputy, Rucart, vice-chairman of the Army Committee, spoke in terms which I should like to be allowed to quote, so much do they harmonise with the thought expressed yesterday by our Comrade Dimitrov.

"The Republicans know that they can count upon the loyalty of the army—the expression of public force, the army composed of the sons of the whole people—to give the lie to all those who may endeavour to make of it a tool for the ambition of one man or for that of a minority faction. In the armies of the land, the sea and the air—officers, non-coms, soldiers and sailors—they salute the national forces constituted for the defence of liberty."

We present ourselves to the masses of the people as the champions of the liberty and the independence of the country, as the representatives of the present and future interests of the people of France. The very tone of our campaigns, of our speeches, articles, and posters, express this consciousness of the historic mission of the working class, organised and led by its revolutionary party.

It was this policy that has enabled the French Communist Party to initiate, stimulate and effectively influence a mass movement of considerable extent. Elements of the working class, passive up to now, have been aroused to political life. Considerable sections of the petty bourgeoisie have been carried along into the struggle against fascism. Naturally enough, there are special, diverse, often contradictory interests among all the social elements and strata united under the emblem of the People's Front. It follows that the Party must know how to achieve the material demands of all strata, to influence the whole movement, ideologically and politically, and organise it, by considering it from the standpoint of the proletariat, which represents the interests of the whole toiling people of France. It is not sufficient to formulate demands—that is the first step. We must—we realise this—obtain even minimum successes by mass action.

What is more, we must formulate slogans and proposals that raise the movement higher. We are the Party of the proletariat, of the most exploited as well as the most homogeneous and the most revolutionary class, the class that expects its complete

liberation only from a total transformation of society. The Communist Party—Party of the working class—armed with Marxist-Leninist theory, is alone in a position to pursue a consistent policy, which has proved itself so magnificently in the Soviet Union. The same is not true of our friends and allies. The trading and rural petty-bourgeoisie hates capital, and the bankers, the holders of credit, above all; but it believes in the eternal existence of its property, and even in the possibility of increasing it. The representatives of the free professions, the medium and upper ranks civil servants, have illusions and prejudices of another sort. They believe present-day society can be improved gradually and peacefully. Among all these elements there sometimes is a grain of chauvinism in their anti-fascism. To them fascism appears essentially under the aspects of Hitler and the Nazi bands. The parties and groups based upon the middle classes inevitably reflect the latter's illusions and prejudices. They cannot pursue a consistent policy. They frequently vacillate. We try to show them that the success of the anti-fascist movement, of the People's Front, can only be guaranteed in so far as the non-proletarian labouring masses group themselves around the working class.

How can this march of the petty-bourgeoisie towards the positions of the working class be facilitated? By showing that the working class is able to direct the general struggle and by proving its own strength. That is how Comrade Manuilsky replied to this question in his speech closing the Eleventh Plenum of the E.C.C.I.:

"To win allies to the side of the proletariat is only possible . . . by demonstration of the strength of the proletariat and of its vanguard—the Communist Party."<sup>8</sup>

It is undeniable that the masses of the people in town and country, the middle classes, and the peasants in particular, play a very important historic role. But this role is never an independent one, however; they either fall under the influence of the big bourgeoisie, of capital, and become the tool of its policy, or they ally themselves with the working class.

In the first case, the results are an increase in the exploitation and the oppression of all the toilers—in our age, fascism. That is what was proved by the experience of France in 1848-52, of Germany from 1918 to 1933, and of Spain since 1931.

In the second case, the results are the end of the exploitation and oppression of the people, the flourishing of democracy and of

<sup>8</sup> D. Z. Manuilsky, *The Communist Parties and the Crisis of Capitalism*, p. 107 (Co-op. Edition).



the people's liberties. That is what is brilliantly proved by the experience of the Soviet Union.

Finally, our Communist Party must "employ a wealth of organisation" to unite and consolidate the anti-fascist people's movement.

In spite of real progress, organisation still remains our weak point. There are thousands of united front committees. The Amsterdam movement alone, under the attentive direction of Barbusse, has grouped around itself 2,000 committees. But that is still quite inadequate. Moreover, many committees have been constituted merely at the top by the meeting of representatives of the participating organisations. The Party's efforts must aim at the democratic election of the committees at the bottom in the factories, in meetings in the villages, and in the urban districts. Experience has already taught us that in this field we must call upon the initiative of the masses, who have already found the most diverse forms for coming together.

## V. THE ORGANISATION OF THE PEOPLE'S FRONT

Comrades, in actively pursuing the mass policy that I have just outlined, in interesting itself in the demands of all the sections of the labouring population, in taking a stand on all questions, our Party has succeeded in effecting the triumph of the People's Front throughout the country. We have been able to extend in considerable measure our influence among the working class and the small tradesmen of the middle classes.

When the Central Committee conceived the idea of the People's Front and when it drew up the latter's programme in October 1934, we could not have imagined that its success would be so immediate.

First of all, we informed the Socialist Party of our intentions. Then, without waiting for a reply, which was long delayed, we raised the question in a big central meeting the day after our interview with the representatives of the Socialist Party.

The Party carried on a sustained campaign in the press, by posters, in meetings, and from the tribune of the Chamber. On the eve of each of the two congresses of the Radical Party, in Nantes in October, and in Lyons in March, the Communist Party organised big meetings where representatives of the Central Committee outlined our conception of the People's Front, addressing themselves particularly to the Radical delegates.

A long public discussion started with the Socialist Party. But the workers and the lower middle-class elements acclaimed the People's Front. The slogan and its content triumphed among the

masses during the recent municipal elections. Our bourgeois fascist opponents themselves no longer employ any other expression to designate the huge anti-fascist movement which is gradually operating under the influence of our policy.

At the end of May, the Party decided to extend the People's Front still further, and to address itself to the parties of the Left with a view to action against the fascist leagues, to have a motion introduced in Parliament demanding that the government disarm and dissolve the fascist leagues. The Communist fraction, consisting of nine deputies at the time (out of the 615 in the Chamber), took the initiative of calling a meeting of the Left Parliamentary groups. Upon invitation, the Socialist Party associated itself with our initiative. The Radical Party, the Republican Socialist Party, the Socialist Party of France (Neo-Socialists), the Group of Left Independents, and the Pupist groups (composed of renegades from our Communist Party), replied to our call. The meeting took place on May 30th. The discussion began on the declaration made by the representative of the Communist Party:

"We Communists," we said, "want to fight fascism. The municipal and cantonal elections show that the majority of the country is against the so-called National Union policy, which is paving the way for fascism. This majority can find expression here, in the Chamber itself, as the groups that have replied to our invitation constitute a majority of the Chamber. If this majority wishes to put into effect a programme striking at the rich and the speculators, relieving the poor and unemployed, *we Communists will support this measure.* If this majority wishes to defend democratic liberties, not in words but by taking effective measures, such as the disarmament and the dissolution of the fascist leagues and the arrest of their leaders, *we will support these measures.* Such a policy," we added, "would, moreover, create the best conditions for the maintenance of peace, and it would have our support, not merely in Parliament, but throughout the country."

The impression produced was tremendous. Our declarations were repeated in public session, from the tribune of the Chamber. That very evening the Flandin government was overthrown.

We had given the Radical deputies a little more courage. Afterwards, the Left groups met again, always at the initiative of the Communists. A discussion started regarding the eventuality of a Left government. It was our Communist Party that was the driving force at these meetings, putting questions, making it clear that it would under no circumstances participate in a Left government, but stating that it was always ready to support



measures favourable to the labouring masses. The Socialist Party and the Radical Party were led to define their respective policies. In the meanwhile the Bouisson government had been formed. But the pressure of the masses, reflected in the attitude of the majority of the Radical deputies, elected by peasants, was such that Bouisson was overthrown the day he came before the Chamber.

And the sessions of the Left delegations were resumed.

The Socialist Party submitted as the basis for its agreeing to collaborate with the Radical Party a programme of socialisation, which I shall return to later and which the Radical Party rejected. Then our Party made the following declaration, which was published:

"The Communist Party notes that on two occasions the Chamber has taken a stand against the plenary powers which would imperil democratic liberties and would aggravate the situation of the labouring masses.

"These votes express the country's desire, notably expressed in the municipal and cantonal elections, to put an end to the so-called National Union policy, to which the most legitimate interests of the working class and of all those who toil have been sacrificed.

"The Communist Party, whose fundamental programme includes the socialisation of the means of production and exchange, which will be realised by a Workers' and Peasants' Government, believes that it is possible and necessary at the present time to pursue a policy of positive action, based upon a wide People's Front.

"The Communist Party, reaffirming its previous declarations regarding its eventual attitude towards a Left government, recalls that it is ready to support, within the Chamber and throughout the country, every measure suited to safeguard the franc, to suppress speculation energetically, to protect the interests of the labouring population, to defend democratic liberties, to disarm and dissolve the fascist leagues, and to maintain peace."

In the meantime, the Laval Cabinet had been formed. The Communist Party had played a prominent role during the two Cabinet crises. With its outcry of indignation, the reactionary and fascist press underscored the success of our tactics.

At this moment the Amsterdam-Pleyel Committee took the initiative of calling the people's demonstration of July 14th. It obtained the participation of numerous groups and organisations, among them the General Confederation of Labour and the Radical Party. The Executive Committee of the Radical Party, specially

convened for this purpose, voted for it unanimously, except for one vote, after having heard the report of its president, Herriot.

And now? The Party has influenced considerable masses of the middle classes, drawing them towards the Left, towards the working class. Based upon the drive of the masses, the Communist Party has contributed to the overthrow of two successive Cabinets. New problems arose before our Party. The question arises of an eventual united front government or a government of the anti-fascist People's Front.

Of course, parliamentary combinations analogous to those of Brandler in Saxony in 1923 are out of the question. Nor does this mean a "Labour Government" of the kind we have witnessed, or are still witnessing, in England and in various Scandinavian countries, and even less a coalition government like those in which the Socialist Parties are participating, or have participated, in Belgium, Czechoslovakia and Spain. It is not a question of managing the affairs of the bourgeoisie. What is involved is fighting fascism, barring its road to power at any price, basing ourselves upon the urge of the masses and upon extra-parliamentary action.

We Communists are fighting for Soviet power, for the dictatorship of the proletariat. We know that this is the only way to put an end to the crisis, to poverty, to fascism, and to war forever. But we also know that *at the present time only a minority of the working class, and above all, only a minority of the people of France share our convictions and are fighting with the firm desire to establish Soviet power.* That is why Soviet power cannot be the immediate goal of our present struggle. But although we are in a minority, we can and we must lead the majority of the country, which is determined to avoid the establishment of a fascist dictatorship at all costs. We can and we must convince the masses, in the struggle and on the basis of their own experience, of the necessity of attaining a Soviet Republic.

The discontent that is accumulating and making itself felt in numerous demonstrations against the emergency decrees can explode and lead to the overthrow of the Laval government. The development of the People's Front and its constant reinforcement can cause it to become the successor of the National Union governments.

A new Cabinet crisis will mean the beginning of a serious political crisis. Laval is said to have told Herriot: "If I resign owing to the opposition of the Radicals, the Parliamentary recess will end with the dictatorship of the Croix de Feu." The Com-



unist Party, moving spirit of the People's Front, can cast a decisive weight in the scale of events. If the People's Front lacks cohesion and boldness, a political formation still more reactionary may follow the Laval government, the government of National Union; it may even be succeeded by a fascist dictatorship. We must keep in mind the steps which led along apparently legal roads from the Müller government to the Hitler government, via Bruening, von Papen and Schleicher.

If, on the contrary, under conditions when the revolutionary crisis surges upward and is intensified, the Communist Party launches, propagates, popularises and gets adopted, in time, a minimum of measures of a transitory nature that can "shake still more the economic and political power of the bourgeoisie and augment the forces of the working class," the drive of the mass movement can impose a People's Front government, which our Party would support and in which, if necessary, it might even participate.

The anti-fascist battle would become even fiercer, since the reactionary and fascist assault would be brutal and immediate. But the People's Front and the Communist Party would have occupied new positions, which we would have to utilise to prepare for the establishment of Soviet Power, the dictatorship of the proletariat.

This is no doubt a bold policy, which demands much firmness and prudence. Our Party can put a policy of this sort into effect. It no longer runs the risk of confusing itself or of being confused with the other parties. In severe struggle, by fifteen years of battle, we have conquered our place in the political arena. It is not merely the Communist Party, its members and its militants, as well as its sympathisers, that are conscious of their unique role and of the unique goals that they are pursuing in an absolutely independent fashion, but the allies and the opponents of Communism now acknowledge, each in his own fashion, our proletarian and revolutionary originality, and they take into account our own strength and our own activity.

In particular, we owe this independence to the application of the "class against class" tactics that has caused us to appear on an absolutely different plane, distinct from all other parties, including the Socialist Party. Our action of February 9th was guided by these principles of independence.

## VI. THE STRUGGLE FOR THE UNITY OF THE WORKING CLASS

The Communist International has never stopped fighting to

have the working class' desire for unity realised. It has not stopped demanding the fighting unity of all proletarians. For many years it has addressed itself in vain to the Labour and Socialist International with a view towards organising the united front in all countries.

On March 5th, 1933, the Communist International asked the Communist Parties to approach the Socialist Parties with a view to realising the bloc of all toilers everywhere against the menacing progress of the fascist offensive, and to ensure aid for our brothers of Germany.

On October 10th, 1934, the Communist International directly approached the Socialist workers and their leadership, proposing the urgent organisation of joint action on behalf of the workers and peasants of Spain, violently attacked by reaction, the fascists and the monarchists.

On October 15th, 1934, there took place the Brussels interview, where Cachin and I, on behalf of the Communist International, met with the representatives of the L.S.I., Vandervelde and Friedrich Adler. When we pressed the leaders of international Social-Democracy to give a favourable reply to our loyal and earnest proposal, they asked us this question: "Is this a manoeuvre on a grand scale or is this a change of line by Moscow?" We replied as was fitting. Our Comrade Cachin said:

"I am sorry to hear you talk of manoeuvre. . . . We are in a Europe which is two-thirds fascist. If to-morrow fascism should establish itself in Spain [the battle of the Asturias was at its height] what strength, what power will fascism not acquire, and will not fascism in France derive tremendous encouragement therefrom? How much more dangerous will fascism everywhere become? And so to imagine under the circumstances that we should dream of manoeuvring would, indeed, at the present time, be entertaining a very poor opinion of us.

"The danger is there, our houses are on fire; the working class is everywhere endangered in most tragic fashion."<sup>9</sup> And I added:

"I will tell you quite frankly, citizen Adler, that this is neither a new line nor a manoeuvre on a grand scale on Moscow's part. There has not been and there will not be any change in the policy of the Communist International. . . . We regard what we have done as correct. I even add that we consider that the experiences of the Bolsheviks, in contrast to the

<sup>9</sup> *Verbatim Report of the Negotiations Between the Second and Third Internationals*, London, 1935, p. 15-16.



experiences of the Socialist Parties in other countries, appear to us more than conclusive, I would even say decisive.<sup>10</sup> appear to

Comrades, you know the results. The delegates of the Second International postponed their reply until the meeting of the conference of their International, which met in Paris in November. This postponement was tantamount to a refusal. And at this conference the delegates could not agree on the tenor of their reply to the Communist International. They had to confine themselves to withdrawing—as they themselves put it in their letter—their resolution of March 18th-19th, 1933, prohibiting their parties from establishing the united front on a national scale. Henceforth, they wrote, each Socialist Party remains free to act as it sees fit.

We had achieved the first great success. Must it again be recalled that in April our Communist International once more turned to the Labour and Socialist International, requesting that the May First demonstrations be organised in common against fascism and war? This time again in vain.

Nevertheless, the united front was gradually being organised in France.

In the twelve years since 1923 we addressed the Socialist Party 26 times. Each time we met with a refusal, sometimes even a rude one. The first earnest step was realised in July 1932 with the Amsterdam Congress. At the Amsterdam Congress, the French delegation included numerous Socialists officially delegated by sections and even by federations. In spite of reprisals and expulsions aimed at the Socialist comrades, a fraternal contact was established in the Amsterdam Committees.

In March 1933, when we turned to the Socialist workers and to their leadership on the basis of the letter of the Communist International, we did not receive a direct reply, but Blum tried in a series of articles to keep his party from the united front.

But international events, especially events in Germany, were already influencing the state of mind of the Socialist workers.

February 6th, 1934, furnished the decisive impetus. The Socialist workers threw themselves into the fight alongside the Communist workers, participating in the action decided upon by the Party in Paris and in the provinces.

On May 30th we addressed ourselves to the Permanent Administrative Commission of the Socialist Party, asking it to organise a joint struggle for the liberation of Thälmann. For the first time we had an interview with Blum and Zyromski. After thinking it over for several weeks, the leadership of the Socialist Party once

more rejected the united front. But in the meanwhile, the Socialist Federation of the Seine had accepted our proposal to organise and to participate in a joint demonstration against the Croix de Feu on July 8th. Since then the Communist initiatives met with more and more favour among the Socialist workers. The Socialist National Council, which met on July 15th to vote on our public proposal for a pact of joint struggle against war and fascism, finally accepted the united front.

You know the contents of the pact. It concerns the organising of joint action, and pooling our organisation resources for the struggle against fascism. We had proposed that the action against the emergency decrees should, over and above the ordinary methods of agitation and public demonstration, include the preparation and the calling of strikes. We had proposed that the Communist Party and the Socialist Party together should address the two trade union federations, the C.G.T. and the C.G.T.U. The Socialist Party refused. In order to conclude the pact, we had agreed to a concession with regard to criticism, taking our line from the letter of the Communist International dated March 5th, 1933. We subscribed to the following text:

“During this common action, the two parties will reciprocally abstain from attacks and criticism of the organs and the militants loyally participating in the action. However, each Party, outside the joint action, retains its independence to develop its own propaganda without insulting or outraging the other Party, and to ensure its own recruiting of members.” The pact gave the working class of France a great deal. It reinforced the impetus towards trade union unity; it made it possible to draw the middle classes in more effectively. But what must be underlined is that before, as well as after the signature of the pact, our Party never for a moment forgot that the essential content of the united front is action.

We took the initiative for the action of February 9th, 1934. Then February 10th, 1935, when we, by ourselves, the Communist Party, decided to invite the Paris proletariat to honour the memory of its dead of February 9th, 1934. We later invited the Socialist Party to participate in our demonstration.

We likewise took the initiative on May 19th this year, on the occasion of the traditional demonstration at the Wall of the Communards, organised under the direction of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. Under the influence of Trotskyite elements, the Socialist Federation of the Seine wanted to pledge us on May 19th to a counter-demonstration against the Croix de Feu. We replied: “Here is our decision. If you want to go to

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, p. 19.



the Wall of the Communards on the 10th, well and good; you will have your place in the procession. If you do not wish to, we shall go to the Wall without you." And the Socialist Federation of the Seine had to abandon its project and join in our parade. Two hundred thousand toilers were at the Wall under the leadership of the Communist Party.

Parallel to the organisation of the united front from below, we bent our efforts to develop the struggle for trade union unity. The next step in the organisation of the unity of the working class in France must be the realisation of trade union unity.

In view of the fact that Comrade Gitton will speak on this question, I merely wish to point out how far we have been able to advance along the road to trade union unity thanks to the united front, in spite of the bitter opposition of certain reformist leaders. Seven hundred united trade unions have been formed. The railwaymen's unions have been unified on all rail systems, with the exception of two. United local unions and united departmental unions have already been established.

The leadership of the General Confederation of Labour has had to agree to resume discussions with the representatives of the Unitary Confederation of Labour with a view to the realisation of trade union unity.

The Communist Parties now bear a very great responsibility in view of the crisis of the Socialist International, in view of the decline in the latter's influence and membership. The Socialist workers must not be allowed to fall into disillusion and despair. What is more, we must not allow a part of them to fall under the influence of fascism. It is now a question of leading them into the joint struggle against fascism, even if they are not yet entirely in agreement with us, even if they still harbour suspicions of us, which the joint struggle will weaken or cause to disappear.

To use Blum's expression, we have worked to render the united front "inevitable," and in fact we have rendered it inevitable. By signing the pact certain Socialist leaders thought they would be able to re-establish their authority over the Socialist members and organisations, who had been gradually led to choose between Party discipline and the necessary united front with the Communists. But the workers sometimes have the feeling that certain leaders of the Socialist Party are looking for every occasion to provoke or aggravate difficulties, to slow down united action, nay, even to break the united front.

Three precise facts contributed to give this impression.

First of all, there was the discussion of the People's Front. From the very beginning, the Socialist Party was hostile to our conception of the People's Front. It tends to consider the various problems from a parliamentary standpoint and displays a certain fear of mass action. But it wanted to give itself a more Left appearance. It found our programme too moderate; it felt that demanding a capital levy was not sufficient. It proposed the socialisation of the banks and big industry.

We very calmly replied: "We Communists are for socialisation; we are for expropriation pure and simple of the capitalist expropriators, but we consider that one condition must be fulfilled in order to socialise, just one little condition: the possession of power, the seizure of power. Now, there is only one method of seizing power that has proved its worth up to now: that is, the method of the Bolsheviks, the victorious insurrection of the proletariat, the exercise of the dictatorship of the proletariat and Soviet power. (Applause.)

"However, we Communists are not proposing our fundamental programme to you Socialists. We propose that you agree with us upon what can be done together this very day. Do not ask us to adopt your programme. We can fight together for immediate demands; we can impose a levy on capital. We have a greater chance of having this demand of the capital levy accepted in that it formerly figured in the programme of the Radical Party. Moreover, it is a measure that has already been applied in other countries."

After four months of discussion—public discussion carried on in the columns of our newspaper *l'Humanité*, as well as by the exchange of documents, letters, resolutions—it was found that the disagreement still existed. We continued our efforts. And the Socialist Congress of Mulhouse, which took place after the municipal and cantonal elections, had to adopt a resolution in favour of the People's Front.

The second fact: at the time of the criminal assassination of our Comrade Kirov, the proletariat of the Soviet Union and its Communist Party energetically took severe and rigorous measures against the assassins and their accomplices, as it was the duty of proletarians in power to do.

The Bolsheviks have learned and retained the lesson of past revolutions. They know that the generosity of the Communards towards the Versailles adherents was requited by the ferocious assassination of 35,000 Communards. The Bolsheviks struck the assassins with the sword of proletarian justice, and then these



counter-revolutionaries found champions even among the Socialists.

Leon Blum wrote a tearful article. His paper *Le Populaire* printed the odious declaration of the Russian Mensheviks. We replied energetically and without delay, sharply accusing the Mensheviks themselves. We recalled Robespierre's historic phrase: "The sensitivity that bewails only the sufferings of the people's enemies is suspect to us." We proclaimed our complete solidarity with revolutionary justice, with the Bolsheviks. The Mensheviks and their friends were silenced.

The third fact: when the Franco-Soviet pact of mutual assistance was concluded, and especially when the communiqué was published after the conversation between Premier Laval and our Comrade Stalin, the bourgeois press tried to score a triumph over the Communists of France. They noisily emphasised Stalin's statement about "understanding and approving France's policy of national defence," and "the necessity for the country's putting its material forces upon the level of its defence." The attack did not come only from the side of the reactionaries.

The Socialist Party and its press heaped their sarcasm upon us. Leon Blum wrote that he could not get over his astonishment. He asked, he queried: "Did Stalin really reflect before disapproving the action of the Communist Party and the Socialist Party?"

The Trotskyites, the renegades, the Pupists, with Doriot at their head, played their villainous role.

The day after the publication of the communiqué, a meeting of the Communists and sympathisers of Paris took place. The speaker of the Political Bureau declared in substance that: (1) The peace policy of the Soviet Union is in conformity with the historic instructions of Lenin; it is firmly conducted by Stalin; it corresponds to the interests of the international proletariat; (2) in view of the international situation, in particular the accession of fascism to power in Germany, there is for the moment a coincidence between the interests of bourgeois France and of the Soviet Union against Hitler and his National-Socialism, the principal instigators of war in Europe.

We added: the working class of France and its Communist Party resolutely continue their struggle against the French bourgeoisie; they remain opposed to any "sacred union," opposed to the eventual use of the army against the working class, opposed to the yoke imposed on the colonial peoples by French imperialism. We do not have to support the class policy of the French bourgeoisie. We continue to denounce and to protest in the name of

the working class, at the head of the working class, against the increase in military credits, and against the return to the two-year term of military conscription.

But we Communists of France, who do not judge war in the fashion of the bourgeoisie, reformist or pacifist parties, declare that in case of aggression against the Soviet Union, we shall know how to rally all our forces and defend the Soviet Union in every way. (Applause.)

After this report a resolution was unanimously voted by the audience of 5,000, with only one dissenting vote. The Communists went into meetings and mass meetings organised by the Party in connection with the cantonal elections. They developed the content of the big poster that we had immediately placarded on the walls under the title "*Stalin is Right.*" In this poster we had reproduced and commented on the wise words pronounced by the leader of the international proletariat, our Comrade Stalin.

The results: in the cantonal elections that took place a week later, our Communist Party made a gain even over the municipal elections, securing 25 out of the 50 seats in the General Council of the Seine. (Applause.)

For a long time the Socialist leaders advocated unity as opposed to the united front. But our Party replied: "The united front will prepare for the united party." When, thanks to our efforts and to the masses' support, unity of action began to be realised and to spread, we ourselves formulated our concept of a united proletarian party.

Last November we proposed to the National Council of the Socialist Party that a national unity conference be called, that joint meetings, open to members of the Communist and Socialist Parties, be held, and that in these joint meetings the problems of immediate action and the question of a single party of the proletariat be discussed.

We renewed our proposal last May in a document entitled "*The Unity Charter of the Working Class.*"

In the introduction, which gives a brief analysis of the situation, we repeated Stalin's phrase: "*The idea of storm is maturing in the minds of the masses.*"

The principles formulated in our proposal are as follows:

- (a) No class collaboration.
- (b) No sacred union.
- (c) Transformation of the imperialist war into civil war.
- (d) Defence of the Soviet Union in all cases and by all means.
- (e) Support of the colonial peoples.



- (f) Preparation for armed insurrection, for the dictatorship of the proletariat, for Soviet power, as the form of the workers' government.
- (g) Consistent internationalism.
- (h) Affiliation to a single party of the working class.
- (i) Democratic centralism.
- (j) Work within the factories.

We ended with a general exposition of the programme that the proletarian state would carry out, what it would give the various categories of toilers.

The leadership of the Socialist Party has not yet replied, although our Central Committee asked it to be so good as to let us have its opinion on the question of unity.

The united front has been very useful for the working class; it has enabled it to offer better resistance to the offensive of fascism, to the offensive of capital. The united front has brought the sections of the petty-bourgeoisie closer to the working class. Certain Socialist leaders, those of the Right in particular, said: "If we accept the united front, the middle classes will withdraw from the working class." Facts have given the lie to this assertion.

The united front has also strengthened our Communist Party. That was not the essential aim. It was one of the consequences of unity of action. The influence and the authority of the Communist Party have grown. Its membership has grown considerably. The political ability of the Party has progressed.

Cadres have been trained. Yes, there has been great difficulty, hesitation, groping. Everything was not all right; everything is not all right yet. But what tremendous changes! How the spirit of responsibility and initiative has grown in our ranks!

We are recording excellent results, not merely for our Party, but for our Young Communist League as well. We set before our League the task of winning the young, of saving them from fascist demagoguery, of satisfying their need for activity, of working to create an organisation of youth that does not narrowly copy the slogans and the formulas of the Communist Party. Our Young Communist League has increased its membership five-fold; it has played a big part in the Amsterdam-Pleyel movement; it has rallied around its united front platform the Young Socialist organisations and the Republican and secular youth organisations. It has concluded a pact with the Young Socialist League, in spite of the prolonged resistance of the Socialist Party.

The labour sports movement has been united. It has gained 10,000 new members and now has nearly 40,000.

The A.R.A.C., the association of ex-servicemen, has developed. It was created by Henri Barbusse and at the beginning had a few thousand members; it now has 20,000. It has obtained admission to the General Confederation of Ex-Servicemen, which comprises two and half million members. (*Applause.*)

Our election tactics have been inspired by the permanent aim of beating the candidates of fascism and of reaction. In the first ballot we have waged an independent struggle. In the second ballot, on the basis of applying the pact, we have voted Socialists for Communists, and Communists for the Socialists reciprocally, with rare exceptions. In the municipal elections we allowed a few joint lists of candidates.

In view of our People's Front policy, we called for votes for Radicals in Paris and in the provinces; we put only the following conditions: defence of democratic liberties; disarmament and dissolution of the fascist leagues. In Paris we demanded in addition: vote against Chiappe. In a few cases we even set up joint lists with the Radicals.

In Paris we withdrew our candidate, who had topped all the anti-fascists, and we had the Socialist Rivet elected against one of the most prominent representatives of reaction.

Such a policy has made our Party grow in the minds of the toilers. Our Party appears as one not pursuing a niggardly policy, but as a great political party, acting with good sense, and with a clear perspective of the efforts to be made and the battles to be waged, a correct idea of the means to be employed to carry off the victory.

Comrades, we hope that our experience will be useful to the toilers of other countries. And I address myself particularly to our brothers of Germany, to the German Socialist workers, I express to them my hope of returning some day soon, as on January 15th, 1933, to the tomb of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, desecrated by Hitler's dogs, to celebrate there, alongside Thälmann, their victory attained thanks to the unity of the working class. (*Applause.*)

We are happy, comrades, to greet the unity of action partially realised by our brothers in Austria and Spain, where fighting has taken place.

We are proud that our International once again loudly and clearly proclaims that it is ready to engage in negotiations with the leadership of the L.S.I., both to organise a united front and to prepare for the complete unity of the international proletariat. The situation in France and throughout the world makes it in-



cumbent upon us to be more and more exacting with regard to our own successes. Too great weaknesses still exist in our movement and in our Party, especially in the field of economic struggles and of trade union work, among the peasantry, the women and, generally speaking, in matters of organisation, the

Although some progress has been effected in organisation work, it is quite evident that we must do much more. Great tardiness, inadequate scope persists in the work of the Party on all levels. We must also make a greater effort to raise the ideological level of our Party.

In France, great battles are impending. We have before us the prospect of great class conflicts that our Comrade Pieck portrayed in his closing speech. At this very moment ferment is growing because of the emergency decrees. The 800,000 officials—these bulwarks of the state that Marx talked about in his "Eighteenth Brumaire"—are rising; the petty-bourgeoisie is losing confidence in the leadership of the parties of the big bourgeoisie. Demonstrations are frequent, numerous, enthusiastic and militant. The drive toward the united front, toward unity, toward the anti-fascist People's Front, is growing. But there is also the menace of fascism, which is strengthening its organisations and arming its fighting squads. The bourgeoisie is trying to isolate our great Party in order to smash it and to break the resistance of the labouring masses.

We bear a great responsibility toward the working class of France, toward the people of our country, and toward the international proletariat. We are conscious of this responsibility and of the obligations that it lays upon us.

Strengthening the united front in the political field, and even more so in the economic field, attaining trade union unity, extending and consolidating the anti-fascist People's Front, winning the wide peasant masses, securing the dissolution and the disarmament of the fascist leagues that are plotting against the people and against the republic and are plotting with Hitler against peace, fighting all the forces of reaction, against the church, fighting to purify the army, to defend our liberties, to defend the Soviet Union.

To realise these tasks we must strengthen our Communist Party, taking as our inspiration Stalin's thought: "*The victory of revolution never comes by itself. It has to be prepared for and won. And only a strong proletarian revolutionary party can prepare for and win victory.*"<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> *Socialism Victorious.*

We want to accomplish these tasks. We want to respond to the hopes that Lenin placed in our working class and in the Communist Party of France when he wrote us in 1920, asking us to join the Third International.

We want to be worthy both of the revolutionary past of the people of France, of the fighters of the glorious Commune, and of the example of the Bolshevik Party, the builder of the new Socialist world.

We want to spare our country the shame and horror of fascism, to contribute to the liberation of our brothers bowed under the yoke of fascism, to fight with all our heart, with all our strength, for bread, for liberty, for peace, for the defence of the Soviet Union. We want to go further, to the French Soviet Republic, whose triumph we shall achieve under the banner of the Communist International, under the invincible banner of Marx, Lenin and Stalin.

We know that the battle will be hard, but we are sure of victory and we do not fear to breast the tumultuous waves at Dimitrov's summons since the helm of our ship is in the firm hands of the greatest of pilots, our dear and great Stalin. (Loud and prolonged applause. The delegates rise and sing the "Internationale." The German delegation shout a mighty "Rot Front!")